Message Text

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R 190720Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4739
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
INS WASHDC

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EO 11652: NA TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: JAPANESE POLICY ON INDOCHINESE REFUGEES

- 1. SUMMARY: THE JAPANESE EMBASSY IN BANGKOK CONFIRMED THAT THE JAPANESE ARE WILLING TO ACCEPT AN EXTREMELY LIMITED NUMBER OF BOAT REFUGEES AND THAT THE JAPANESE PLEDGE OF \$10 MILLION TO THE UNHCR FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IS DESIGNED PRIMARILY TO SUPPORT LOCAL SETTLEMENT OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN THAILAND. END SUMMARY
- 2. IN A MAY 18 MEETING WITH AN EMBASSY OFFICER, JAPANESE COUNSELOR FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS, RYOJI ONEDERA, INDICATED THAT THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT WILL ACCEPT BOAT REFUGEES FOR PERMANENT RESETTLEMENT IF THE REFUGEES HAVE A RELATIVE IN JAPAN, JAPANESE FOSTER PARENTS, OR A JAPANESE GUARANTOR. FOR CONSIDERATION, THE REFUGEES WILL ALREADY HAVE TO BE IN JAPAN, OR TO ARRIVE IN JAPAN BY VESSEL.
- 3. ONEDERA ALSO NOTED THAT THE \$10 MILLION PLEDGE TO THE UNHCR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WILL BE IN ADDITION TO THE \$1.5 MILLION THAT JAPAN ALREADY PROVIDED TO THE UNHCR FOR CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN ASIA. ONEDERA ASKED WHETHER THE U S WOULD ALSO PROVIDE ITS OFFER OF ONE TO TWO MILLION DOLLARS THROUGH THE UNHCR. THE EMBASSY OFFICER INDICATED THAT THIS COURSE IS THE MOST LIKELY ONE, BUT THAT FINAL ARRANGEMENTS WOULD AWAIT AN INDICATION OF RTG INTEREST IN ACCEPTING THE OFFER.

4. ONEDERA SAID THAT HE WILL BE TRYING TO VISIT SOME REFUGEE CAMPS IN ADVANCE OF THE ARRIVAL OF JAPANESE FOREIGN MINISTER SONODA IN MID-JUNE. ONEDERA SAID THE FOREIGN MINISTER MIGHT VISIT A REFUGEE CAMP OR THE DIN DAENG TRANSIT CENTER. THE EMBASSY OFFICER NOTED THAT THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO DIN DAENG HAD BEEN A HIGHLIGHT OF HIS STAY IN BANGKOK AND THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER MIGHT ALSO BENEFIT FROM SEEING IT. WHITEHOUSE

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